

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic marketplace comprising one or more computers collectively supporting a market having two sides and in which there are generally substantially fewer market participants associated with the first side than with the second side, each market participant associated with the first side generally having a substantially greater market capacity than each market participant associated with the second side, the first side being substantially sealed such that offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants, the second side being substantially open such that offers associated with the second side are substantially accessible to substantially all of the market participants, the one or more computers collectively operable to:

receive offers from market participants associated with the first side and from market participants associated with the second side, each offer comprising at least an offered price and an offered quantity;

15 prioritize among any offers associated with the first side that comprise substantially equal offered prices and among any offers associated with the second side that comprise substantially equal offered prices according to a predetermined prioritization scheme, the prioritization among such substantially equally priced offers determining the order in which they are matched with other offers;

20 match a first offer associated with the first side with a second offer associated with the second side according to a relationship between a first offered price associated with the first offer and a second offered price associated with the second offer; and

25 determine a strike price for the match between the first offer and the second offer based on the relationship between the first and second offered prices.

2. The system of Claim 1, wherein:

the first side of the market comprises a bid side, the market participants associated with the first side comprise buyers, and the offers associated with the first side comprise bids; and

5 the second side of the market comprises an ask side, the market participants associated with the second side comprise sellers, and the offers associated with the second side comprise asks.

3. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first side is substantially sealed

10 such that offered prices and offered quantities of offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to all market participants.

4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the second side is substantially open

such that offered prices of offers associated with the second side are substantially accessible to all market participants.

5. The system of Claim 1, wherein the substantially equally priced offers

are prioritized according to the order in which they are received, an earlier-received offer being given a higher priority than a later-received offer having a substantially

20 equal offered price.

6. The system of Claim 1, wherein:

the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first and second offered prices being substantially equal to each other; and

25 the strike price for the match between the first and second offers is substantially equal to the first and second offered prices.

7. The system of Claim 1, wherein:  
the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first offered price being substantially different from the second offered price; and

5 the strike price for the match between the first and second offers comprises a price between the first and second offered prices.

8. The system of Claim 7, wherein the first offered price is substantially greater than the second offered price and the strike price for the match between the first and second offers comprises the second offered price plus a predetermined fraction of the price difference between the first and second offered prices.

10 9. The system of Claim 1, wherein a partial depletion of an offered quantity due to one or more matches is substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants.

15 10. The system of Claim 1, wherein the one or more computers are further operable to remove an offer from the second side of the market without giving any of the market participants any indication whether the offer was removed due to the occurrence of a match between the offer and another offer or due to the cancellation 20 of the offer.

11. A computer-implemented method for providing dynamic pricing in an unbalanced market, comprising:

providing a market having two sides and in which there are generally substantially fewer market participants associated with the first side than with the

5 second side, each market participant associated with the first side generally having a substantially greater market capacity than each market participant associated with the second side, the first side being substantially sealed such that offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants, the second side being substantially open such that offers associated with the second side are substantially accessible to substantially all of the market participants;

receiving offers from market participants associated with the first side and from market participants associated with the second side, each offer comprising at least an offered price and an offered quantity;

15 prioritizing among any offers associated with the first side that comprise substantially equal offered prices and among any offers associated with the second side that comprise substantially equal offered prices according to a predetermined prioritization scheme, the prioritization among such substantially equally priced offers determining the order in which they are matched with other offers;

20 matching a first offer associated with the first side with a second offer associated with the second side according to a relationship between a first offered price associated with the first offer and a second offered price associated with the second offer; and

determining a strike price for the match between the first offer and the second offer based on the relationship between the first and second offered prices.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein:

the first side of the market comprises a bid side, the market participants associated with the first side comprise buyers, and the offers associated with the first side comprise bids; and

5 the second side of the market comprises an ask side, the market participants associated with the second side comprise sellers, and the offers associated with the second side comprise asks.

13. The method of Claim 11, wherein the first side is substantially sealed

10 such that offered prices and offered quantities of offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to all market participants.

14. The method of Claim 11, wherein the second side is substantially open

such that offered prices of offers associated with the second side are substantially 15 accessible to all market participants.

15. The method of Claim 11, wherein the substantially equally priced

offers are prioritized according to the order in which they are received, an earlier-received offer being given a higher priority than a later-received offer having a 20 substantially equal offered price.

16. The method of Claim 11, wherein:

the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first and second offered prices being substantially equal to each other; and

25 the strike price for the match between the first and second offers is substantially equal to the first and second offered prices.

17. The method of Claim 11, wherein:  
the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first offered price being substantially different from the second offered price; and  
the strike price for the match between the first and second offers comprises a price between the first and second offered prices.

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18. The method of Claim 17, wherein the first offered price is substantially greater than the second offered price and the strike price for the match between the first and second offers comprises the second offered price plus a predetermined fraction of the price difference between the first and second offered prices.

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19. The method of Claim 11, wherein a partial depletion of an offered quantity due to one or more matches is substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants.

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20. The method of Claim 11, further comprising removing an offer from the second side of the market without giving any of the market participants any indication whether the offer was removed due to the occurrence of a match between the offer and another offer or due to the cancellation of the offer.

21. Software supporting a market having two sides and in which there are generally substantially fewer market participants associated with the first side than with the second side, each market participant associated with the first side generally having a substantially greater market capacity than each market participant associated

5 with the second side, the first side being substantially sealed such that offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants, the second side being substantially open such that offers associated with the second side are substantially accessible to substantially all of the market participants, the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

10 receive offers from market participants associated with the first side and from market participants associated with the second side, each offer comprising at least an offered price and an offered quantity;

15 prioritize among any offers associated with the first side that comprise substantially equal offered prices and among any offers associated with the second side that comprise substantially equal offered prices according to a predetermined prioritization scheme, the prioritization among such substantially equally priced offers determining the order in which they are matched with other offers;

20 match a first offer associated with the first side with a second offer associated with the second side according to a relationship between a first offered price associated with the first offer and a second offered price associated with the second offer; and

determine a strike price for the match between the first offer and the second offer based on the relationship between the first and second offered prices.

22. The software of Claim 21, wherein:

the first side of the market comprises a bid side, the market participants associated with the first side comprise buyers, and the offers associated with the first side comprise bids; and

5 the second side of the market comprises an ask side, the market participants associated with the second side comprise sellers, and the offers associated with the second side comprise asks.

23. The software of Claim 21, wherein the first side is substantially sealed

10 such that offered prices and offered quantities of offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to all market participants.

24. The software of Claim 21, wherein the second side is substantially open such that offered prices of offers associated with the second side are

15 substantially accessible to all market participants.

25. The software of Claim 21, wherein the substantially equally priced

offers are prioritized according to the order in which they are received, an earlier-received offer being given a higher priority than a later-received offer having a

20 substantially equal offered price.

26. The software of Claim 21, wherein:

the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first and second offered prices being substantially equal to each other; and

25 the strike price for the match between the first and second offers is substantially equal to the first and second offered prices.

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27. The software of Claim 21, wherein:  
the relationship between the first and second offers comprises the first offered  
price being substantially different from the second offered price; and

5      the strike price for the match between the first and second offers comprises a  
price between the first and second offered prices.

28. The software of Claim 27, wherein the first offered price is  
substantially greater than the second offered price and the strike price for the match  
between the first and second offers comprises the second offered price plus a  
10     predetermined fraction of the price difference between the first and second offered  
prices.

29. The software of Claim 21, wherein a partial depletion of an offered  
quantity due to one or more matches is substantially inaccessible to substantially all of  
15     the market participants.

30. The software of Claim 21, wherein the software is further operable to  
remove an offer from the second side of the market without giving any of the market  
participants any indication whether the offer was removed due to the occurrence of a  
20     match between the offer and another offer or due to the cancellation of the offer.

31. A system supporting a market having two sides and in which there are generally substantially fewer market participants associated with the first side than with the second side, each market participant associated with the first side generally having a substantially greater market capacity than each market participant associated

5 with the second side, the first side being substantially sealed such that offers associated with the first side are substantially inaccessible to substantially all of the market participants, the second side being substantially open such that offers associated with the second side are substantially accessible to substantially all of the market participants, the system comprising:

10 means for receiving offers from market participants associated with the first side and from market participants associated with the second side, each offer comprising at least an offered price and an offered quantity;

15 means for prioritizing among any offers associated with the first side that comprise substantially equal offered prices and among any offers associated with the second side that comprise substantially equal offered prices according to a predetermined prioritization scheme, the prioritization among such substantially equally priced offers determining the order in which they are matched with other offers;

20 means for matching a first offer associated with the first side with a second offer associated with the second side according to a relationship between a first offered price associated with the first offer and a second offered price associated with the second offer; and

means for determining a strike price for the match between the first offer and the second offer based on the relationship between the first and second offered prices.

32. An electronic marketplace comprising one or more computers collectively supporting a market having a bid side and an ask side and in which there are generally substantially fewer buyers associated with the bid side than there are sellers associated with the ask side, each buyer generally having a substantially greater buying capacity than the selling capacity of each seller, the bid side being substantially sealed such that bid prices and bid quantities associated with bids are substantially inaccessible to the buyers and sellers, the ask side being substantially open such that ask prices associated with asks are substantially accessible to the buyers and sellers, the one or more computers collectively operable to:

5 receive bids from buyers and asks from sellers, each bid comprising at least a bid price and a bid quantity, each ask comprising at least an ask price and an ask quantity;

10 prioritize among any bids that comprise substantially equal bid prices and among any asks that comprise substantially equal ask prices according to the order in which they are received, an earlier-received bid or ask being given a higher priority than a later-received bid or ask having a substantially equal bid or ask price, higher-priority bids or asks being matched with asks or bids before lower-priority bids or asks are matched with asks or bids;

15 match a bid with an ask according to a relationship between a corresponding bid price and a corresponding ask price;

20 determine a strike price for the match between the bid and the ask based on the relationship between the corresponding bid and ask prices;

25 if the corresponding ask quantity is fully depleted due to the ask being matched with the bid, remove the ask from the market without any buyer or seller receiving any indication whether the ask was removed due to the ask being matched with the bid or due to a cancellation of the ask; and

if the corresponding ask quantity is only partially depleted due to the ask being matched with the bid, reduce the corresponding ask quantity in accordance with the

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partial depletion without any buyer or seller receiving any indication that the corresponding ask quantity was reduced.